

The Zanoni

Gulf St Vincent



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ZANONI?

The 338 ton composite barque Zanoni was built in Liverpool in 1865 and was 139 feet (44 metres) in length. It was built by W H Potter & Co and owned by Thomas Royden & Sons and intended for the East India trade.

The Zanoni is the most intact 19th century merchant sailing vessel located in South Australia.

The ship has suffered no contemporary salvage and the ship's hull, the equipment used aboard, and the possessions of the master and crew are available for study making this site a rare and valuable archaeological resource.

There were a number of unsuccessful searches for the wreck and despite the offer of a reward, the wreck remained undiscovered until 1983. The location of the shipwreck has now been fixed and buoyed. Permits for diving on the wreck can be obtained from the Maritime Heritage Branch of the Department for Environment and Heritage.

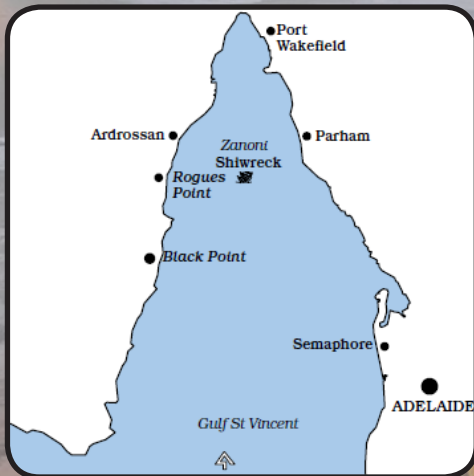
The Zanoni shipwreck can be found ten nautical miles south east of Ardrossan. Many of the artefacts retrieved from the wreck of the Zanoni can now be viewed at the Ardrossan Museum.

The Zanoni has been declared an Historic Shipwreck under the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981. A yellow buoy marks the position of the wreck.

In addition a 550 metre Protection Zone has been declared around the wreck. This means all activities, even taking a boat into the zone, are prohibited unless a permit is obtained from the Department of Environment and Heritage. No fishing is allowed but permits are issued to divers to view the wreck site provided they abide by certain conditions.

A barge was sunk 1 nautical mile south of the Zanoni in 1984 to act as an alternative place for fishing and has been marked by a yellow buoy.

To purchase a permit, please contact the Department of Environment and Heritage - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/historic-shipwrecks/permits>



This brochure has been adapted from the 1985 Department for Environment and Heritage brochure.

For further information contact the Heritage Branch of the Department.

The Zanoni left Liverpool on 14 February 1866 on its maiden voyage to Lima, Peru, probably with a cargo of British manufactured goods and produce. From here she sailed to Port Louis, Mauritius, with 400 tons of guano where after its discharge, 4,551 bags of sugar were taken on board bound for Port Adelaide. The Zanoni arrived at Port Adelaide on 13 January 1867.

After receiving 15 tons of bark and some wheat at Port Adelaide, the ship proceeded to Port Wakefield on 2 February to complete loading wheat.

The final voyage ...

On 11 February 1867 under the command of Captain Summers and with crew of 13 and two stevedores, the Zanoni set off on a return trip to Port Adelaide to obtain her clearance to London. She was now laden with the bark and 4,025 bags of wheat.

The weather was fine but at 1:30 pm a threatening squall was observed to be approaching from the westward. Captain Summers immediately took the precaution of reducing sail. The sea was lashed to a fury and was 'whirled into the air by the peculiar nature of the cyclone'. The ship was thrown on her beam ends and the crew made for the weather side, but as they did so the ship rolled over keel upwards.

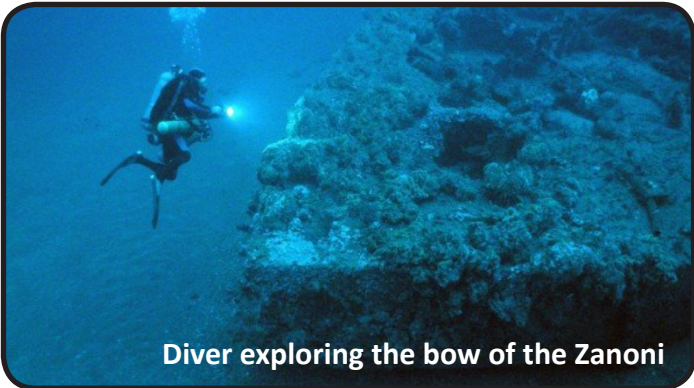
Some managed to scramble onto the keel and were able to assist others, including the captain, who had been clinging to the ship's side. Realising that the ship would soon founder, the best swimmers began to make for one of the ship's boats. Five or ten minutes after the squall stuck, the ship had disappeared.

The storm passed away almost as quickly as it had come, and at about 11:00 pm all sixteen men were rescued by the sailing ketch Powles and taken back to Adelaide

Thomas Lancaster, 2nd mate of the Zanoni said the ship was correctly stowed, although stevedore Henry Daulby said four or five bags of wheat on either side in the lower hold would give her a list while loading.



Diver holding the anchor



Diver exploring the bow of the Zanoni

Unsuccessful searches

Captain Douglas, Marine Board President, searched unsuccessfully for the Zanoni on 2 February 1867. Captain Wells, of the tug Young Australian, failed to find the vessel during a week of searching. A £100 reward was offered to anyone who could pinpoint the wreck in March 1867. Despite a rumour that the reward had been claimed, the wreck remained undiscovered.

Discovery of the wreck

In the 1980s abalone diver John McGovern offered a reward for any information on the location of the Zanoni. This brought a response from retired fisherman REx Tyrrell of Port Vincent. He took John and Ian O'Donnell out to a site 15 km south east of Ardrossan on 17 April 1983, and after a quick dive they found the remains of a vessel.

The location of the shipwreck has now been fixed and buoyed, and is just over two miles north east from the position in which the survivors first reported the Zanoni to have sunk.



A moonlighter fish at the Zanoni wreck

Description of the wrecksite

The wrecksite of the Zanoni comprises one of the most complete remains of a vessel of its type and age to be located in South Australia and possibly Australia.

The wrecksite is in 18 metres of water lying on a barren sea bed. Numerous types of fish inhabit the wrecksite which is covered by sponges. It consists of the entire length of the vessel, lying over on its port hull. The middle part of the vessel has collapsed, with most of the starboard hull lying on top of the flattened port hull. The fore and mainmast have broken and lie on the sea bed adjacent to their respective stumps.

A most spectacular view is obtained of the bow of the vessel which is intact over its full depth and for a length of nearly ten metres. The best bower anchor is lying below the starboard bow. The sternpost and rudder stands nearly six metres off the sea bed.

Protection and Management

The Zanoni has been declared a Historic Shipwreck under the Historic Shipwreck Act 1981. A Protected Zone of 550 metres has been set up around the shipwreck, and all activities - even taking a boat into the zone - are prohibited unless a permit is obtained. Permits are issued to divers to view the wrecksite provided they abide by certain conditions. A buoy has been set up near the wreck site and all authorised dive boats must moor to this buoy.

Ardrossan Museum

Many artefacts that have been retrieved from the wreck of the Zanoni can be viewed at the Ardrossan Museum. This exhibit includes clothing and personal items, stores and provisions, and parts of the ship. The museum is accessed via the visitor information outlet and is open to the public daily between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.



Sign on the Zanoni wreck